



NEWSLETTER

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Message from the Director General



As we get into this new season, we want to take a moment and share some highlights of what has been happening.

We are thrilled to showcase a featured program through photographs of the Moose Hide Preparations Program that was provided through the Cultural Department. This was an opportunity for community members to bring their moose hides and go through the fascinating steps of preparing their moose hides. We had our skilled Elder Alice Shecapio Blacksmith and David G. Bosum provide these important workshops to ensure that we keep this very important tradition going. We are so thrilled that community members came out and took part of this program.

We also wanted to provide a spotlight on the achievement of our Youth. These awards highlighted each youth's achievement in their area of strength and passion. We also wanted to share our Local Men's Association's first ever Men's Achievement Awards. We celebrate everyone's achievement and their contribution to a better tomorrow.

Our Social Development Department have been busy engaging in programs in wellness, self-care and healing. We wanted to share some photos of the programs they provided. There is always something happening at Social Development!

At Ouje-Bougoumou Cree Nation, the programs, and services we provide are for you. We want you to be involved. We want you to help make a difference in our beautiful community. There are plenty of opportunities and programs where you can be involved. There is a place for you in our vibrant community. Stay informed through our Facebook page and be involved.

Remember, OBCN is powered by the passion and dedication of our members. Together we can create meaningful change and make a lasting impact on community and beyond.

Thank you for your continued support and involvement. We look forward to connecting with each of you.

Carrie Bush
Director General

Council Portfolio (2 YEARS)

- **Governance** - Gaston Cooper
 - . Communication
- **Administration** - Gaston Cooper
 - . Finance
 - . Public Safety
- **Capacity Building** - Angel Mianscum
 - . Education
- **Community Development** - Karen Bosum
 - . Housing
 - . Economic Development
- **Health & Social** - Suzanne Kitchen
 - . Spirit & Unity
 - . Elders
- **Natural Resources** - Wesley Mianscum
- **Culture, Traditional Knowledge, Cree Language** - Alice SB
 - . Land Base Camp
- **Youth, Elders, Family, Men & Women** - Albert St-Pierre
 - . Sports & Recreation



Partnership Meeting

A great and exciting beginning to 2024.

When the Local Partnership Agreement was signed in July 2023, this was a statement of intent in collaboration between public services providers to ensure that all our community needs are continuously prioritized and addressed.

Representatives from various departments in the Ouje-Bougoumou Cree Nation, Cree Health Board, Cree School Board, Local Women's Association, Local Men's Association, Nuuchimi Wiinuu and Mamu Lodge came together to discuss their plans and on-going projects/ services for our community. This was a time of networking and building a bridge on how we can join our resources to bring services and meaningful programs to our members of all ages.

Many programs currently offered or will be introduced was discussed. Some of the programs mentioned was Grief Support Groups, Baby College, Wiichihewin Workshops, Mental Health Matters, Land Base Couple's Retreat, Cree Family Life Workshops, Youth & Elder's Workshops, Programs for men and women and and much more.



Office of the Chief

On January 22, 2024 Ian Lafreniere paid a courtesy visit to Ouje-Bougoumou and met with Chief Gaston Cooper and Deputy Chief Angel Mianscum.

The meeting was very cordial and both Chief Cooper and the Minister shared their views regarding a positive relationship

between the Cree Nation and the Government of Quebec. They both shared their hopes for a strengthening of the relationship through finding common ground.

The Chief and Deputy Chief described a number of important issues for Ouje-Bougoumou:

Zone 17 – Moose

Ouje-Bougoumou and the Cree Nation faces challenges concerning the reliance on moose as a crucial food source. There remains an ongoing issue related to the scope of sport hunting in Zone 17. Recognizing that this is an issue of regional concern, Chief Cooper indicated his intention to meet with the neighbouring municipality leadership on this and other issues of mutual concern.

Mine Principale

Chief Cooper described the history of this project. Ouje-Bougoumou created the pressure to ensure that the abandoned Mine Principale would be rehabilitated and restored. This project, undertaken by Quebec, will have significant job opportunities and contracting opportunities for Ouje-Bougoumou, neighboring Cree communities, Chibougamau and First Nations. Chief Cooper mentioned that a letter was recently sent to the Quebec minister responsible for energy and natural resources requesting clarity on the process for awarding contracts related to this project. Ouje-Bougoumou is waiting for a response to this letter.





Ouje-Bougoumou Commercial Center

Despite increased project costs due to inflation, Ouje-Bougoumou has secured some funding but seeks additional assistance from Quebec. Minister Lafreniere agreed to explore eligibility to new Quebec Government programs to financially support this project as it will be an important contribution to the local economy.

Bill passed by Quebec National Assembly

Chief Cooper expressed gratitude to Quebec for the passage of the bill which established the Ouje-Bougoumou Landholding Corporation which will have control over Category IB lands. This bill completes the legal requirements by Quebec to fully incorporate Ouje-Bougoumou into the James Bay and Northern Quebec Agreement.

Tourism

Chief Cooper described Ouje-Bougoumou as an important tourism hub which highlights Cree culture and language. Ouje-Bougoumou will

be working in collaboration with the Cree Language Commission and will implement strategies to strengthen Cree language. The Chief highlighted Nuuchimi Wiinuu's role in preserving Cree culture and how this vital service is essential.

Mining on Territory

Chief Cooper provided an overview of current mining exploration activities on the traditional Ouje-Bougoumou territory, emphasizing the need for responsible mining practices in accordance with the Cree Mining Policy.

Ouje-Bougoumou Enterprises Inc.

Deputy Chief Angel Mianscum briefed the Minister on activities currently being undertaken by Ouje-Bougoumou Enterprises Inc. and its subsidiaries, and showcasing ongoing initiatives.

Deputy Chief Mianscum also mentioned the Broadback Fishing Camp and Cree Culture Excursions provided by local members. The Minister expressed interest in returning to experience the tourism activities and services provided on our territory.





Announcement by the Government of Quebec on the Implementation of the Restoration Plan of the Principale Mine.

April 19, 2024

Ouje-Bougoumou, Eeyou Istchee

Chief Gaston Cooper & Deputy Chief Angel Mianscum welcomed Mme Maité Blanchette Vézina, Minister of Natural Resources & Forest. The following is the speech Chief Cooper delivered to the delegation and guests at this milestone announcement:

The Oujé-Bougoumou Cree Nation welcomes this announcement with great enthusiasm. As we mark this important milestone, we would like to pay tribute to the Wapachee family, who have played a crucial role in addressing environmental and health concerns related to the Principal Mine located on their traditional trapping territory. Their legacy fuels the optimism of this project, which promises economic revival through job creation and the expansion of local businesses, as well as significant environmental improvements and enhanced community health. With the recent passing of Matthew and Maggie, we are certain they would have been extremely proud of this achievement.

The announcement today is important for the people of Ouje-Bougoumou. In a sense, today represents thirty

years of hard work on the part current and previous leadership of the Ouje-Bougoumou Cree Nation, to bring attention to the presence of toxic contamination on our traditional territory resulting from the operations of the Principale Mine.

In the late 1990's, late Joseph Shecapio-Blacksmith approached Council and presented them with suspicious deformed fish harvested from Dore Lake, very near the abandoned Principale Mine site.

I want to acknowledge and honour the late Joseph Shecapio-Blacksmith for his efforts in the role he played for Ouje-Bougoumou. His family is here today.

I also want to acknowledge the previous leadership, Chief's Abel Bosum, Louise Wapachee, Sam Bosum, Reggie Neeposh and Curtis Bosum for their continuous efforts in keeping this file alive.

Finally, to the Wapachee Family, to the tallyman and to the land users of 0-59. We will finally restore and rehabilitate the Principale Mine site.

Meegwetch, Merci and Thank You.





Lets welcome our new employee's within our organization to Human Resources

Human Resources Department

Ms. Rosie Shecapio-Blacksmith, Receptionist
Ms. Roxanne B. Mianscum, Assistant to Director of Human Resources
Ms. Makana Shecapio, Administrative Assistant

Housing Department

Mr. Ryan Wapachee, Maintenance Worker
Mr. Robin Mianscum, Maintenance Planner
Mr. Nathan Rabbitskin, Building Maintenance
Mr. Alex Lacroix, Building Maintenance
Mr. Simeon Dixon, Building Maintenance

Executive Department

Mr. Lance Cooper, Communications & Public Relations Officer
Ms. Thy Le, Graphic Design & Multimedia Specialist

Public Works Department

Mr. Steve Longchap-Lapointe, Auto Mechanic

Natural Resources Department

Mr. Joey Capasissit Lacroix, Eco center supervisor
Mr. Geoffrey Bosum, Eco Technician
Mr. Jimmy Lord, Director of Assinica Park

Finace Department

Ms. Kayla Bosum, Accounting clerk
Ms. Moera Shecapio-Blacksmith, Cost Control & Purchasing clerk

Social Development Department

Ms. Janie Wapachee, Director of Social Development

Youth & Recreation Department

Ms. Leeanne Bosum, Office Agent Registrar



Youth Achievement AWARDS

An evening to honour our amazing Youth.

The Youth Council held their annual Youth Achievement Awards on December 27, 2023. An evening of dinner and presentations to acknowledge and honour the young individuals who were nominated by their fellow peers. This event provided an opportunity to showcase their strengths and talents.

Chief Gaston Cooper, Deputy Chief Angel Mianscum and Youth Chief Miguel Shecapio-Blacksmith handed out these prestigious awards.

Recognizing and celebrating the contributions of our young people is crucial in building their confidence and encouraging them to continue making positive impacts in our community.

The recipients were:

13-35 years old:

Life Saver: Isaac Bosum

13-17 years old:

Education: Faith Asquabaneskum

Artistic Talents: Landon Cooper

Nathaniel Bosum Memorial: Noah Bosum

Humanitarian: Davis Mianscum

Culture: Myles Cooper

Sportsmanship: Ryan Cooper

18-35 years old:

Education: Gabriel Wapachee

Artistic Talents: Valentina Bosum

Nathaniel Bosum Memorial: Jayden Shecapio-Blacksmith

Leadership: Patricia Bosum

M.V.P. – Most Valuable Parent: Mikuan Sharl

Phoenix: Leeanne Bosum

Sportsmanship: Darius Gibson

Culture: Timmy Bosum

Humanitarian: Makana Shecapio



Youth Activities

Every day and evening are filled with various events at the Youth Center!

From scheduled activities like Volleyball nights, Midnight Hoops, Poker night, and Karaoke Night to festive holiday events like Elf on the Shelf, Car Rallies, and Co-Ed Hockey and Broomball Tournaments, there's never a dull moment.

At the Co-Ed Hockey and Broomball Tournament held after Christmas, the Broomball Champions were the Gingerbread Gliders, and the Hockey Champions were the Mistletoe Mavericks. We are so grateful for everyone who came out to participate and to everyone who contributed, we greatly appreciate your help to make this a fun and memorable event.

To nurture the spirit and mind of our youth, an ongoing Wellness Fitness Challenge encourages participants to promote a healthy lifestyle and prioritize mental health. Maz leads training sessions in kickboxing, cardio,

and full-body workouts.

Taco Tuesdays provide a platform for youths to share ideas while enjoying a meal together. Taco Tuesdays happen every two weeks, check with the Youth Department on when the next lunch is, and don't miss out on the great time together with friends.

Additionally, exciting opportunities like the Snow Shoe Journey to Opawica River is being planned and we encourage you to sign up. This event is planned for February.

Workshops on personal budgeting and financial literacy offer diverse experiences for our young community members.

The Afterschool Multi-Sport Program further encourages engagement at the Youth Center gym, open daily from February 5 to March 31, 2024. Send your children for a time of fun and games.

A dedicated team at the Youth Department remains committed to

keeping our youth active and inspired.

Visit the Youth Center to stay informed about upcoming events and activities!

Renovation of the Sports Complex

Most of the interior work will be completed in February 2024 and will be fully operational in the very near future. The progress of the renovations will be posted, and we look forward to the full operations of the sports complex in the coming months.

Swimming Pool Programs

Chris Round from Activation is working to develop new and exciting swimming programs. An online survey was made available to gather information from our community members. Be on a lookout for exciting swimming programs for all ages.

An opportunity to become lifeguards will be coming soon. We encourage you to sign up and be involved.



Ouje-Bougoumou welcomed George St-Pierre

The UFC Champion was the highlight of the Ouje Fight Night on April 12, 2024.

Fans of all ages gathered to meet and greet the UFC Champion as he delivered a moving speech on believing in yourself, finding a passion, and building on your dreams. George spoke on the importance of getting out of your comfort zone and looking ahead on how you can tackle the opportunities and challenges ahead. There is no courage without fear, to overcome fear, you need to prepare yourself and build your confidence.

The evening continued with 14 contests that included our own young people and visitors from across the region. The arena was filled to capacity and those who came enjoyed their time as we witnessed our athletes competing.

A shout out to the Recreation Committee, MFL, Coach Maz and all those who took part in making this event possible.

“Get out of your comfort zone and find your purpose” – George St-Pierre



A remarkable achievement for these homeowners, we've signed over these houses to these families today.

Since its inception in the early 1990s, the OBCN housing program has been created to provide members with the chance to purchase these houses through a Home Ownership Program. Upon complete payment of the acquisition costs a deed of sale

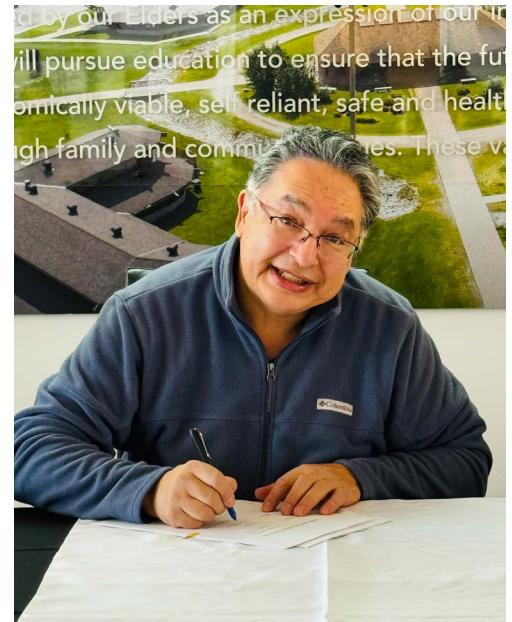
would then be issued for such property.

Since 2020, the OBCN is now able to issue a perpetual grant & agreement of superficies for residential purposes since the creation of the Community Private Housing Initiative (2020) developed by the Cree Nation Government.

The OBCN Housing Program built 120 homes under these

terms, 63 of which have had their acquisition cost paid in full to date. We have started this process of transferring the ownership of these homes in January 2023, today we have signed over 6 more homes with a total of 17 homes to date.

Congratulations to all these homeowners! Meegwetch to you all for your outstanding efforts to support the OBCN Housing Program.



We are delighted to have a full team on staff, we've grown exponentially as a team in part due to federal initiatives to support housing needs in First Nations, particularly in the area of social housing. Our permanent full-time #OBCNhousing team is represented by,

MANAGEMENT			
Minnie Wapachee Director of Housing		Patricia Bosum Assistant Director of Housing	
ADMINISTRATION/ FINANCE	MAINTENANCE	RENOVATIONS/ CONSTRUCTION	RENTAL HOUSING
Manon Bedard Administrative Technician/ Accounting Clerk	Mark Jones Coordinator of Maintenance	Paul Shecapio Local Housing Inspector	Sabina Mianscum Coordinator of Social Program (NEW position)
Kevin Lacroix Collections Officer	Maintenance Worker, Ryan Wapachee (NEW position)	Ricky Bosum Maintenance Worker	Karen Shecapio Blacksmith Rental Housing Administrator
Real Lacroix Administrative Assistant		Raymond Capissit Maintenance Worker	

Be on a look out...

- . 2024 Housing Conference
- . Renovations and New Constructions

Our Housing Committee went through recent changes as well, so this is an opportunity to give orientation and training to Housing Committee and the new members and allow us to look to the future and set goals and objectives with these members so that our housing team can do their part to work towards these objectives.

Members of the housing Committee are as follows: Freddy Bosum, Margaret Bosum, Destiney Isik-Blacksmith, Terrilyn Gull, Kevin Wylde. Karen Bosum has since joined the leadership in the capacity of Councilor, and she continues to

serve in housing as Portfolio holder for Housing. We look forward to working with her as well in that capacity. A great team can accomplish great goals. This growth spurt is an opportunity for us to get to tasks that have long been in the backseat, allowing us to clean up our housing administration, addressing outstanding issues, planning for future needs, and working towards common goals to better serve the Cree Nation of Ouje-Bougoumou. We hope soon enough we can maximize these available resources and work more effectively to our potential.





Congratulations to all the outstanding winners of the Men's Achievement Awards! Tonight, we celebrate your incredible achievements and contributions across various fields. From education to entrepreneurship, from parenting to volunteerism, each of you has left an indelible mark on our community and beyond. Your dedication, resilience, and passion inspire us all to reach greater heights.

Thank you to the Ouje-Bougoumou Men's Association for organizing the first ever Men's Achievement Award in Ouje-Bougoumou. This is also the first in Eeyou Istchee.

God bless you all!

The Recipients:

Indouheenu	Robert Shecapio Blacksmith	Parenting	Jonathan Bosum
Sobriety	Daniel Bosum	Artisan	Peter W. Simard
Cree Culture	Geronimo Shecapio	Elder	Sam JP Bosum
Volunteer	Romeo Shecapio	Front Line	Benoit St-Pierre
Role Model	Bentley Mianscum	Personal Achievement	Gaston Cooper
Health and Wellness	Trevor Bosum	Entrepreneurship	Benny Blacksmith
Leadership	Albert St-Pierre	Education	Trevor Cooper

David G. Bosum and Gerry Bosum were also recognized for their contributions in Moose hide preparations and work at the cultural village.

Janie Wapachee was also recognized for her contribution in assisting the Men's Association in their work and projects.



Past Family *Wellness* Program





Cultural Village

Activities





Women's Gala 2024

We are very pleased to honor and give recognition to OBCN women. The theme we went with is called "Strength & Dignity" a scripture quote on Proverbs 31:25.

A luncheon was held for OBCN women where they received plaques, hoodies, and hats which we made by Nomads Original.

We had special guest such as Deputy Chief, Angel Mianscum including our Director General, Carrie Bush who shared encouraging speeches. Claudette Shecapio-Blacksmith sang songs of inspiration. Everyone was deeply touched.

It was a time to celebrate our women in recognizing their commitment and dedication to the organization, and years of contributing into our community. We uplift the women in the community by being the pillars of strength and expressing their compassion above and beyond.

Over the past years we have held a women's gala to empower our women through recognition awards. We always included awarenesses which included the following – food security, widow support group, special needs, and disability. There would be a night of celebration. But this year we took a different avenue to praise OBCN women who work in leaderships such as elders' council, chief & council, local women's association and Miyupimaatsiun Committee.

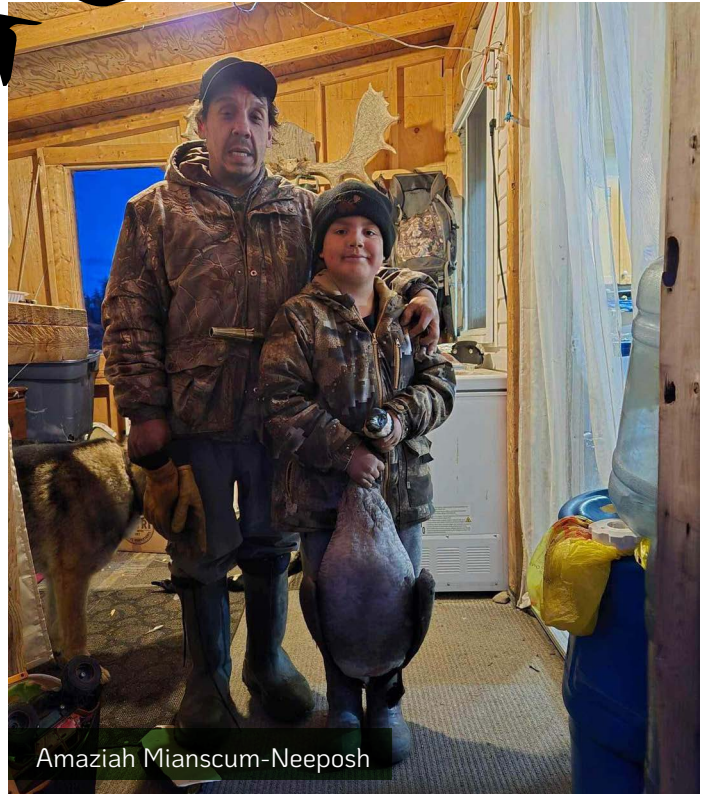
We acknowledge all women you are beacon of light in our community.



FIRST EVER GOOSE KILL 2024



Aiden Longchap-Lapointe



Amaziah Mianscum-Neeposh



Dustin John Mianscum



Maikan Sharl-Ruperthouse



COMING SOON!

As part of our initiative awareness campaign under the Department of Natural Resources, we wanted to begin with an introduction soon too be completed Eco-Center. Our efforts will solely be the promotion of this new site for our community and for our members to understand its purpose and use for our community.

What is an Eco-Center?

The eco-center is a temporary community drop-off location for residual materials. It offers a place to dispose of certain products, materials and equipment that do not belong in the curbside collection of residential waste or recycling. These materials are sorted and then taken to centers where they are recycled, recovered or disposed of in a safe and environmentally responsible manner. Some eco-centers also have facilities to collect and redistribute materials in good condition for reuse.

Its primary objective is to divert as much material as possible from landfills by prioritizing reuse, recycling and recovery of materials before disposal.

Here is a list of accepted materials for recycling, recovery, or disposal. The list can be adapted according to their recovery program and availability of transporting.

ACCEPTED MATERIALS FOR RECYCLING, RECOVERY OR DISPOSAL

- BULKY WASTE (furniture, appliances, etc.)
- REFRIGERATING APPLIANCES (refrigerators, air conditioners, freezers, etc.)
- CONSTRUCTION, RENOVATION AND DEMOLITION (CRD) WASTE:
 - Wood: painted, treated, reusable or from pallets
 - Dry materials: broken glass and windows, exterior siding, insulating wool, cement, etc.
- METALS (steel, iron, etc.)
- TIRES without rims
- HOUSEHOLD HAZARDOUS WASTE (HHW):
 - Paints, stains, varnishes, aerosols
 - Chemicals (pesticides, acid, glue, thinner, cleaner, solvent, etc.)
 - Bulbs with mercury (compact fluorescent, neon, etc.)
 - Oils and used filters and containers
 - Batteries
 - Propane tanks
 - Electronic products (TV, printers, cell phones, computers, etc.)